

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong opposition to this legislation, which will do nothing to make us energy independent. This bill sets us on a dangerous path and ensures that we cannot produce sufficient domestic energy.

I believe we should find solutions to address our energy needs. Unfortunately, this legislation will result in less domestic energy production. This bill increases America's dependence on foreign oil, a dangerous policy for our national and economic security. This is a tax and spend and mandate policy by the Democrats, imposing \$15 billion in tax increases and myriad new government mandates.

They will say these taxes and mandates won't affect average Americans, only oil companies in other businesses. Nothing could be further from the truth. These taxes will impede domestic oil and gas production, discourage investment in refinery capacity, and make it more expensive for domestic energy companies to operate in America than their foreign competitors, making the price at the pump rise even higher. An increased tax doesn't just hurt energy companies, it hurts every American energy consumer.

This legislation does not even address some of our most promising domestic alternative and renewable energy supplies. There is nothing in this bill that addresses clean coal-to-liquid technologies or nuclear energy. Coal is one of our Nation's most abundant resources, yet the development of clean coal technologies is completely ignored.

Furthermore, this legislation doesn't encourage the construction of nuclear energy generation facilities. As the Congress works to promote green energy, we should encourage the production of more nuclear sites which provide energy without CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

In one of the few programs that could lead to increased energy production, I am baffled that it contains Davis-Bacon labor provisions. Renewable energy plans financed through loan guarantees would be located in rural America, but artificially inflated construction costs caused by Davis-Bacon will negate the program in most rural areas.

This legislation does not address the energy concerns of our country. It makes the situation worse. If we want to make America energy independent, this Congress must pass a bill that contains energy. This bill does not.

I urge my colleagues to reject this bill and work to find real solutions to the energy needs facing our country.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to this reckless energy policy, which will do absolutely nothing to make us energy independent, or lower energy costs. This bill sets us on a dangerous path and ties our hands in a regulatory mess to ensure that we cannot produce domestic energy.

Like my colleagues, I believe we should find solutions to address the growing demand for energy. Unfortunately, this legislation contains no energy in it. In the Republican-led Con-

gress, I supported an Energy Bill that actually encouraged energy—domestic energy production—and lessened our dependence on foreign oil. Today's legislation, however, seeks to dismantle any progress we have made in achieving energy independence, and leaves us at the mercy of foreign energy sources.

Many Members have discussed passionately how America needs to decrease its dependence on foreign energy. In fact, many campaigned on promises to decrease our dependence. Sadly, this legislation falls drastically short on those promises. In fact it actually increases America's dependence on foreign oil. This is a dangerous policy for our national and economic security.

Many Americans don't know that the U.S. is the world's largest energy producer. Over the past 25 years we have pumped 67 billion barrels of oil, and strong reserves remain. The fact is the energy sources are there—in Alaska, the Rockies, and offshore—but political roadblocks keep it in the ground instead of in use in the economy. Sadly, this legislation restricts our access to our own energy sources even further.

This energy policy set in place by the Democrat majority lives the Democrat motto through and through—Tax and Spend. This policy imposes \$15 billion in tax increases. The other side will tell you that these tax increases will not affect the average hard-working Americans, only the big evil oil companies. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The taxes contained in this bill will impede new domestic oil and gas production, will discourage investment in new refinery capacity, and will make it more expensive for domestic energy companies to operate in the U.S. than their foreign competitors, making the price at the pump rise even higher.

Let's make no mistake, an increased tax doesn't just hurt energy companies, it hurts every American—individual, farm, or company—that consumes energy. Increased taxes on energy companies are passed to consumers. Every American will see these increased costs on their energy bill. This body shouldn't pass legislation that further raises energy prices for consumers.

While this legislation increases taxes on traditional oil and gas, it does not even address some of our most promising domestic alternative and renewable energy supplies. There is not one thing in this bill that addresses clean Coal-to-Liquid technologies or nuclear energy. Coal is one of our Nation's most abundant resources, yet the development of Coal-to-Liquid technologies is completely ignored by this bill. Furthermore, this legislation does nothing to encourage the construction of new nuclear facilities.

Proponents of this legislation will tout how green this bill is; however, if my colleagues really want to promote green energy they should encourage the production of more nuclear sites which provide energy free of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The rest of the world is far outpacing the U.S. in its commitment to clean nuclear energy. We generate only 20 percent of our energy from this clean energy, when other countries can generate about 80 percent of their electricity needs through nuclear. It is a travesty that in over 700 pages this legislation does not once mention or encourage the construction of clean and reliable nuclear plants. Nuclear energy is the most reliable and advanced of any renewable energy technology,

and if we are serious about encouraging CO<sub>2</sub> free energy use, we must support nuclear energy.

One of the provisions I am most alarmed about in this bill allows for individuals to sue the Federal Government for \$1.5 million for damages caused by global warming. I don't know what this has to do with energy production, but I think this is a dangerous precedent to set. This language gambles with the hard-earned tax dollars of the American people that could get lost in frivolous litigation.

I'm also concerned with the potential sweeping implications of the bill's National Policy on Wildlife and Global Warming. It is nearly impossible to accurately determine the effects that warming temperatures might have on wildlife, let alone take measures to mitigate these effects. The consequences of this section could be as far reaching as the Endangered Species Act or the National Environmental Policy Act and could have severe implications for Federal land management. This does not belong in a so-called energy bill.

I will concede that there are a few, very few, decent provisions in this bill. I am pleased that the Agriculture Energy programs build on the 2002 Farm Bill with more focus on cellulosic materials, including forest biomass and switchgrass. This will help farmers and forest owners by creating new markets and income opportunities to keep them on the land. At the same time, greater focus on cellulosic feedstocks can reduce our reliance on corn for renewable fuels.

With Americans paying close to \$3 at the pump, we must diversify our energy supplies with alternative fuels, including renewable energy from our farms and forests. Renewable energy is a home-grown solution for reducing our reliance on foreign-oil, boosting jobs and economies in rural America, and improving our environment.

However, I am baffled that one of the few programs in this bill that would lead to increased energy production would contain Davis-Bacon provisions. Renewable energy plants financed through the loan guarantee program would be located in Rural America. Rural America simply cannot afford to pay the artificially inflated wages caused by Davis-Bacon as urban America can. By including this unfair labor provision we are putting union interests ahead of efforts to become more energy independent.

Mr. Chairman, in addition to the lack of real incentives for energy production in the U.S., this bill is also bad for our Nation's public forests. The bill guts a program that provides incentives for renewable energy production from small-diameter materials removed from public forests to reduce wildfire and insect risk and improve the health of the forests. With over 5 million acres destroyed by fires and hundreds of millions of dollars spent fighting them so far this year, we cannot afford to take away forest management tools from the Nation's public land managers.

Unfortunately, the bill replaces this program with a Biomass Pilot Program, which would do everything but encourage use of low value forest material for energy. On top of this, the bill attaches the problematic Davis-Bacon provisions to this pilot program.

This legislation does nothing to address the energy concerns of our country; it only makes the situation worse. This bill is a dangerous policy for our country. If we really want to